

Marines FROM THE TRENCHES

In this edition, *Marines* highlights stories about those Marines bearing the weight of the war on terror. From **live-fire training in Peru** and the **Central Command Area of Operations** to **riot-control training in Kosovo**, reserve and active-duty Marines are on guard keeping America safe. On a battlefield closer to home, *Marines* shows what the Corps is doing to **Save a Few Good Species**. We also take a look at the battle to provide better housing in **Homes of the Future**. And once the battle is over and you leave the service, learn what you can do to continue **Living the Ethos After Active Duty**.

2000 report on the challenges facing Marine Corps housing.

A long-time proponent for better military housing in Southern California, Ron Packard, the former representative for California's 48th District, toured some of the older housing areas of Camp Pendleton.

"They were deplorable," Packard said during the DeLuz Housing Area opening ceremony. "It was unfortunate that we were asking our men and women

PPV Provides Homes of the Future

By Staff Sgt. Cindy Fisher
HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS, Washington



Public private venture is the wave of the future for military family housing and the Marine Corps is at the tip of the spear. PPV partners the Corps with private companies in order to provide quality military family housing faster. This military housing privatization initiative is allowed through legislation passed by Congress in the 90s.

The National Defense Authorization Act of fiscal year 1996 authorizes Department of Defense agencies to work with private developers to meet critical housing needs nationwide.

This is a break with the past, when military housing — often considered a low priority when compared to training issues — was managed and maintained by the Corps. The Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. James L. Jones, expressed this shift in attitude at the Oct. 15, 2001, official opening ceremony for the DeLuz Housing Area, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., site of the first PPV project in the Corps.

"We have migrated from a policy of readiness which was defined in very narrow terms. 'Does this Marine have his rifle, his pack, his helmet, his ammunition, his food?'" said Gen. Jones. "We didn't really worry too much in the 60s and 70s about the family — but things are different now."

The Situation:

In recent years, the quality of life in military-managed housing areas has deteriorated for a variety of reasons.

In 2000, 63 percent of the Corps' housing units were more than 30 years old and 53 percent were considered inadequate, according to Karen Ayers, head of Housing Management, Facilities Branch, Installations and Logistics, Headquarters Marine Corps.

As homes age, they require extensive repairs or renovations. This is expensive and creates maintenance backlogs as base housing managers struggle to maintain units at an acceptable living standard.

The estimated cost to fix the problems corpswide is \$1.5 billion, said Ayers in a

▲ **DeLuz Housing at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., is the Marine Corps' first public private venture.**

Official USMC photo

who are serving their country to even live in those conditions."

Adding to the problem of older housing, many installations don't have enough housing. Often, servicemembers must find temporary housing in surrounding civilian communities while waiting for homes to become available in base housing.

The average wait for military housing is 18 months at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif. MCAS Miramar is one of several military installations in the San Diego area, which is home to more than

38,000 active-duty military families.

Often, service members living in civilian communities incur living expenses greater than the basic allowance for housing provided them by the Corps.

Poor and insufficient housing can have a negative impact on the morale of a unit, Packard said. Marines concerned about their families' living conditions have difficulty concentrating on their jobs.

"Dedication to duty is compromised when (servicemembers) are worried about family and home. If things are alright at home, things will be alright in the field," said Packard who served as an officer in the U.S. Navy Dental Corps in the late 50s.

The commandant also expressed concerns about the negative impact housing issues have on retention efforts.

"Not only do we worry about families, we understand that a Marine who has a family will not likely stay a Marine for very long if the family is not taken care of," Gen. Jones said.

Correcting these housing issues has

▲ **This is a typical floor for a four bedroom home in a public private venture complex.**

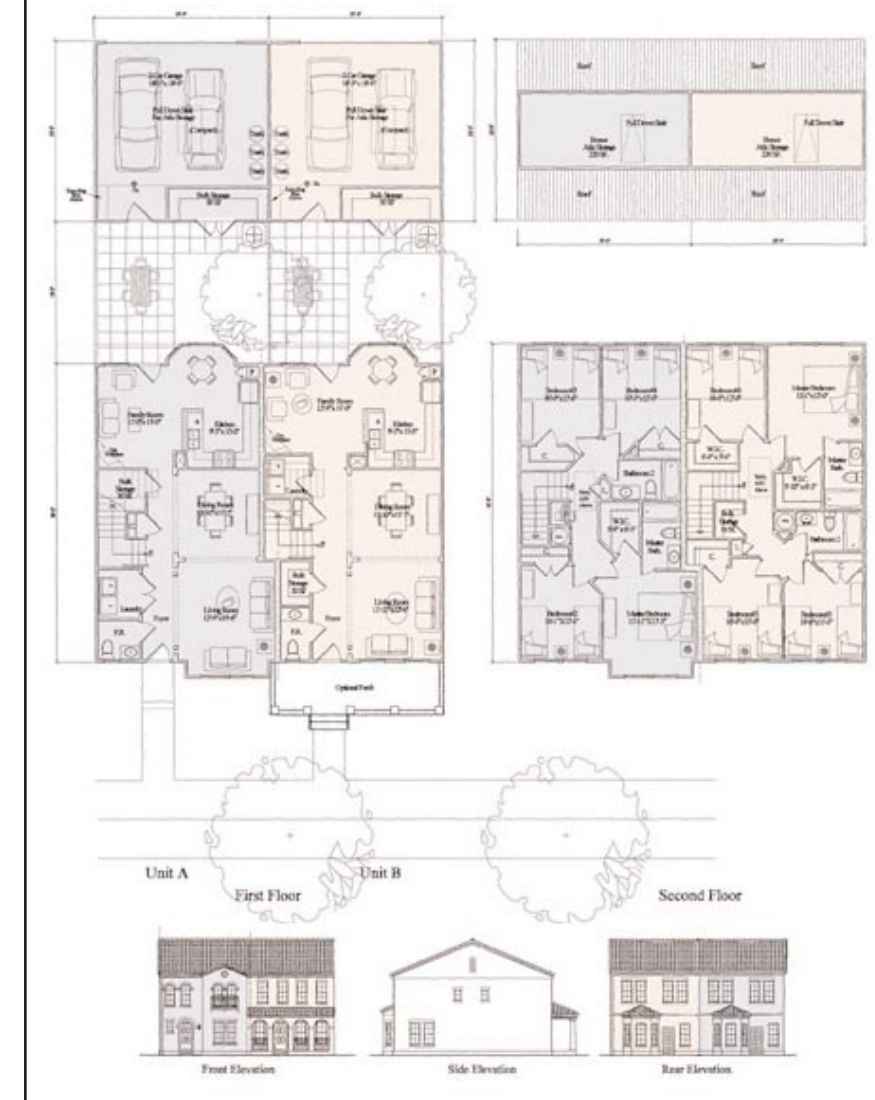
become a long-term project for the Corps. However, budget constraints combined with aging housing units and a maintenance backlog make it difficult for the Corps to provide high-quality housing to Marines and their families.

The Solution:

The Corps is partnering with private companies, usually limited liability companies, to build more and better housing for the same money. The Department of the Navy uses a condensed acquisition process that minimizes the time, effort and money interested parties must put into the process and ensures the "most highly qualified" private company, investor or developer teams with the Marine Corps.

Ventures will focus on privatizing the replacement, renovation, maintenance and operation of existing govern-

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The war on terrorism is not the only conflict the Marine Corps is fighting. Marines wage a daily battle to protect the natural resources entrusted to their care.

Marine Corps' installations encompass 40 miles of coastline, 165,000 acres of forest, agriculture and protected land and more than 2 million acres of training and maneuvering areas, according to officials with the Land Use and Military Construction Branch, Installations and Logistics, Headquarters Marines Corps.

With all of this real estate comes the huge responsibility of protecting its natural resources for future generations,

Saving a Few Good Species

Hitting the Beach, the Jungle or the Desert, Marines are Environmentally Friendly

By Staff Sgt. Cindy Fisher
HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS, Washington

A second lieutenant attending The Basic School guards her squad's perimeter during a field exercise at Camp Barrett, part of Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va. The base hosts the largest colonies of the small whorled pogonia in Virginia. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listed the small, perennial, flowering plant as a threatened species in 1993. Photo by Staff Sgt. Cindy Fisher

according to Maj. Craig Eck, the environmental compliance officer in the Land Use and Military Construction Branch. This battle to protect the environment is fought on several fronts ranging from protecting the endangered species living in undeveloped training areas to reducing the waste material generated by the 173,000 active-duty Marines and their families who live and work on Marine Corps installations.

Some of the Corps environmental objectives include:

- Providing a current environmental policy Corpwide.
- Planning and budgeting resources to meet these environmental objectives.
- Ensuring environmental compliance through management programs and compliance evaluations.
- Promoting prevention as the primary means for maintaining environmental compliance.
- Seeking out innovative technologies

and practices to improve environmental management.

• Implementing training and education at all levels to establish effective communication of the environmental management program.

Mission Versus Environment

With the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, training became even more important as Marines prepare for deployments

in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Yet the Marine Corps must balance this need to provide realistic training with the obligation to protect the land entrusted to its care.

About 50 species of endangered or threatened plants and animals live in the woodlands, marshes, deserts, beaches, rivers and coastal waters managed by the Corps.

"Marines are the federal leaders in proactive ecosystem stewardship, which can be seen by our track record of species protection and recovery throughout the nation," said Heidi Hirsh, a natural resources specialist with the Land Use and Military Construction Branch. Headquarters Marine Corps has established guidelines for minimizing the impact training requirements have on its wildlife.

Individual installations have also established base orders tailored to protect the habitats and wildlife native to their regions. Many installations restrict training during certain seasons to minimize training impacts to the environment.

"The real challenge is to find the balance between natural resource conservation and military training," said William Berry, a wildlife biologist with Environmental Security at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

In some instances, the Corps' need for undeveloped training areas has been crucial to providing ecological preserves. Camp Pendleton, with more than 17 miles of coastline and approximately 125,000 acres of land, contains the largest areas of undeveloped coastal terraces and immediate inland areas in Southern California, Berry said. Eighteen federally-listed species, including the bald eagle, use this base at some point during the year.

While it can be difficult to attribute species improvements due to the Corps' management actions or due to natural or other causes, the numbers are hard to dispute. The California least tern, a federally-listed species, has increased its numbers at Camp Pendleton from about 200 nests in 1985 to over 1,000 nests in 2000, Berry said. "Certainly this increase is due in large part to our management efforts."

Other endangered or threatened species found at Camp Pendleton have shown similar increases over the years, Berry said.

Camp Pendleton is not the only installation winning the battle to protect



A The desert tortoise is one of many species to be found in the training areas of Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif. The U.S Fish and Wildlife Service first listed this species, which has a life span of 80 to 100 years, as threatened in 1980.

Courtesy photo

the environment.

Supervised, amphibious assault vehicle drives through the Nu'upia ponds aboard MCB Hawaii along with the construction and management of new pond areas have improved the nesting grounds for one species found only in Hawaii. The estimated 60 Hawaiian stilts that nested at the ponds in 1982 has doubled to 135 as of January 2001, according to Dr. Diane Drigot, a senior natural resource manager with MCB Hawaii Environmental Department.

Environmental and conservation efforts at MCB Hawaii have earned the installation Department of the Navy environmental awards for the past seven years.

"Saving a Few Good Species"

In 1996, the Marine Corps, working closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, began a poster campaign to educate Marines and the public about the Corps' natural resources stewardship program. The series, titled "The Marines — We're Saving a Few Good Species," con-

tains five posters highlighting some of the Corps successes.

The first poster, titled "These Guys Hit the Beach Everyday" emphasized how the western snowy plover and the Marines of Camp Pendleton can share the same turf cooperatively in environmentally-sensitive areas.

The Secretary of the Interior unveiled the next poster in 1998. "Operation RCW: The New Air-Ground-Team," showed the successful management of the red-cockaded woodpecker by the personnel at MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C. The third poster, "Armored Threat and Threatened Armor," featured the threatened desert tortoise and a tank at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif.

The fourth poster featured the American alligator found at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, S.C. The alligator was listed as endangered in 1967. Thanks to the Marines and USFWS working together, the alligator fully recovered and the USFWS removed the species from the endangered list in 1987, Hirsh said.

The last poster was the first to feature an endangered plant. "Small Whorled — Big Mission" shows Marines training in woods populated with the small whorled pogonia. MCB Quantico, Va., hosts the largest number of plant colonies in Virginia, said Hirsh.

The posters recognize the Marines' military training role as well as the strong ethic they have developed toward natural

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"Marines are the federal leaders in proactive ecosystem stewardship, which can be seen by our track record of species protection and recovery throughout the nation,"



▲ The shotgun team from Weapons Co. prepares to fire simulated "bean bag" rounds at protesters.

Photo by Sgt. Zachary A. Bathon

"Five steps forward shuffle," says the section commander. "Five steps forward shuffle," echoes the section. The section moves forward tapping batons on large shields. The protesters begin to move back, then suddenly turn and begin throwing rocks and water bottles at the Marines.

Someone throws a can of orange smoke. Protestors try to break through the line of Marines, but the Marines hold the line. A snatch team of German Soldiers from the Multi-National Brigade South Military Police Company moves forward and grabs one of the protest leaders.

This scene was replayed several times Sept. 24 as Marines from the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable)'s Task Force Gladiator, comprised of the Combined Anti-Armor Team and Light Armored Reconnaissance Platoon from Weapons Company, Battalion Landing Team, 2nd Bn., 2nd Marines, conducted riot control training with a group of German military policemen here.

"We are conducting riot control training to facilitate joint interoperability with the Quick Reaction Force and the main body," said Maj. Jeffery C. Holt, commanding officer, Weapons Co. "This training will make sure we are mission ready."

To add realism to the training, more

than 20 Marines played the part of angry protesters.

The aggressors protested the U.S. military's presence here and tried to get into their camp to destroy it.

To quell the protestors, the Marines

and Germans parked their respective Light Armored Vehicles at different points in the road to block the entrance into the Marine Camp. The Marines set up a sniper team and medical personnel prepared to handle any potential casualties.

"The training went really well," said Maj. Dirk Jager, the German commanding officer. "Our snatch team was fairly new and it was good for them to get some experience, especially with the Marines, who have good leaders."

"One thing I can say is Marines train very aggressively," said Jager. "It was very realistic training out there."

This training offered Marines a chance to do something they don't often have the opportunity to do, said Lance Cpl. Jeffrey Leshner, scout, Light Armored Reconnaissance Platoon.

"I like doing this type of stuff. It is good to get some practice, in case we have to do it for real," he said. **M**

Training is a Riot at Task Force Gladiator

By Sgt. Zachary A. Bathon
PRIZEN, Kosovo



➤ Marines from Weapons Co. shuffle forward to push back a simulated aggressor during riot control training in Prizren, Kosovo.

Photo by Sgt. Zachary A. Bathon

11th MEU(SOC) Orchestrates Symphony of Firepower

By Sgt. Brian J. Griffin
CENTRAL COMMAND AREA OF OPERATIONS

Marines lay in wait behind their weapons on a ridge-line. From here, the Marines of Company I, Battalion Landing Team 3/1, 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), watch the battle unfold below. As they wait for the signal to engage, a plethora of MEU assets — infantry, tanks, Amphibious Assault Vehicles, Light Armored Reconnaissance Vehicles and helicopters — advance on the desert's horizon.

All are poised for the attack ... of a notional enemy force during the 11th MEU's final live-fire exercise here.

The signal is given.

The air resounds with the booms of tank and AAV weaponry as Marines advance then call in artillery and mortars on the "enemy" position. A Huey sweeps across the scene blazing rockets as LAVs shoot forward firing away. This symphony of fire power is the result of coordination planned well above the squad level.

"The final exercise brought all the parts of the BLT together into one combined attack. We got to work more as a whole unit," said 2nd Lt. Trusten Connor, 3rd Platoon Commander, Company I, BLT 3/1, 11th MEU (SOC).

Bringing a battalion-sized force together to fight successfully did not happen immediately. Scattered on ranges throughout the desert in the U.S. Central Command region for the past two weeks, the Marines refined their battle skills at the small unit level.

"We did squad, platoon and company attacks in preparation for this final exercise. Start small, finish big," Connor said. "It helps to build confidence in the



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Marines with live fire, showing them what it is like to have that responsibility.

"The Marines got to see and do a lot of things they very seldom get to experience. It was nice for them to see an assault at the battalion-level with air support and all the other elements involved," he added.

The large-scale exercise provided junior Marines a valuable experience.

"Working with all the assets involved in the assault was great. It's a good chance for us to see everyone else's role in a battalion-level assault," said Pfc. Matt Christenson, grenadier, 1st Platoon, Co. I.

Two weeks of arduous training culminating in the final exercise paid off by showcasing what a Marine Air Ground Task Force is capable of doing.

"As a MAGTF we integrate our forces into a combined arms team and focus our combat power against an adversary at a precise time and location," said Col

▲ Loading a round, Marines from Gun Team Two, Battery C, Battalion Landing Team 3/1, 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), prepare to fire at targets down range during artillery direct fire training in late August. This was one of the training events held in preparation for FINEX.

Photo by Sgt. Brian J. Griffin

Anthony M. Haslam, commanding officer, 11th MEU (SOC). "This synchronization on the battlefield is the key to our success. As Marines we work to perfect this daily and this FINEX gave us the opportunity, in a live-fire environment, to bring it all together." **M**

"It's a good chance for us to see everyone else's role in a battalion-level assault,"

“Ensure that no Marine who honorably wore the Eagle, Globe and Anchor is lost to the Marine Corps family.”

— General James L. Jones

It is learned at boot camp. It is lived on the battlefield. And the network of veteran Marines around the country live it, too. Marines helping Marines.

Through the new Marine For Life program, this ethos formally extends beyond active duty to those Marines who have served honorably — be it for three or 30 years — and are transitioning back to the civilian world.

“My plan upon retiring from the Marine Corps was to get a job equal in pay to what I was getting in the Marine Corps, and using the skills that I had acquired. However, with today’s unemployment rates it wasn’t that easy,” explains Jade Benay, who retired as a Chief Warrant Office 2 this spring after serving on active duty in the Corps for 20 years. “The Marine For Life program has opened new avenues to do that.”

Benay sought transition assistance from the Marine For Life program in San Diego, and found her current job in drug prevention counseling as a result.

“It lets you know that you are still part of the Marine Corps family,” Benay says of the new transition assistance program. “Just because you’ve left the ranks and no longer wear the uniform, you’re not forgotten.”

In White Letter No. 09-02, the Commandant addresses how commanders will support Marine For Life to include refining the perception of “separation” within the Marine Corps and its ethos so that all Marines understand that end of active service does not equal “end of the Marine Corps.”

As Marines serving honorably represent a significant investment by the Corps, they will be recognized for their contributions while serving honorably. “Separation” and related terms such as “ex-Marine” will be reserved for Marines who have not served faithfully and have

Marines Helping Marines Living the Ethos After Active Duty

By Maj. Whitney Mason
HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS, Washington



been discharged under less than honorable conditions.

Marine For Life works to support transitioning

Marines on their last set of orders home. Those who have served honorably will have the opportunity to connect with the Marine network that exists around the world and in their hometowns—thus ensuring they have the opportunity to remain an important part of the Marine Corps family.

“You gotta love the Marines,” says Jahir Garcia, a veteran corporal who left active duty in 2001 after serving overseas and in California. He and his wife, also a veteran Marine, returned to her hometown of Chicago in March with a new baby to start their new life.

“I met two hometown links—right away, they’re helping me with my resume, they’re giving me job contacts and they’re calling just to encourage me and keep up my spirits,” Garcia said.

Staff Sgt. Michael R. Abragan serves as the hometown link in Chicago. He is one of 46 reservists around the country currently serving on active duty as a Link

▲ Gunnery Sgt. Kathleen A. Butler, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, works as the G-1 Reserve liaison chief for U.S. Marine Corps Forces Atlantic in her civilian job. She feels the Marine For Life program could benefit Marines of all types — active or reserve — as well as all ranks.

Photo by Sgt. Chet Decker

in the Marine For Life program. He had recently established connections with the hiring managers for Cintas Corporation, and he recognized that Garcia had the right skills for a job opening Cintas had just posted. Cintas representatives were delighted to meet Garcia, who accepted their subsequent job offer.

Abragan said, “We’ve built a bridge to connect transitioning Marines with information they need regarding employment, housing, schools, and a whole range of civilian concerns. On the other side, potential employers who network with the Marine For Life representatives can expect to find dependability, trust and solid work experience in the candidates we refer.”

“The work ethic and the attention to detail you get from Marines is something

that they are trained for at the beginning,” said Buddy Welch, director of maintenance at AOA Maintenance in Orlando, and veteran Marine staff sergeant who served on active duty as a helicopter mechanic from 1975 to 1992. Welch recently hired Jeff McNair, a veteran sergeant and F/A-18 aviation mechanic.

McNair met Marine For Life Orlando hometown link Maj. Race Roberson at a job fair in July, and was put in touch with AOA Maintenance within a week.

“I was slaving for little money in a dead-end job, and Marine For Life helped me get back into aviation,” explains McNair.

There’s a sense of camaraderie when working with fellow Marine veterans, McNair said.

With close to 27,000 Marines honorably discharged, and the thousands of Marines who have served in the past settled into civilian jobs across the country, the already existing Marine Corps “alumni association” is huge.

By assembling the existing human networks and making them available via a Web database, Marine For Life is offering a formal mechanism for sponsorship assistance to all Marines.

Roberson has been with Marine For Life since April. His primary focus, and that of the other hometown links since the program began in 2001, has been to build the network of resources so transitioning Marines coming home or relocating will have the necessary contacts to get the assistance they want in finding jobs, housing, school and other community resources.

“There’s been an enormous amount of support from the veteran community,” says Roberson. “It hasn’t been that difficult to build the network.”

“I would say that 99 percent of the employers want to help the program and understand the value that a Marine would bring to the company,” Roberson adds.

“We have lot of Marine-friendly businesses that are looking to hire Marines who have a proven track record of success,” said San Diego hometown link Chief Warrant Officer 3 Alice Slomko. “This makes it a win-win situation for both the Marine and the future employer.”

Once prospective employers see the Marine, the program sells itself, said Indianapolis hometown link Lt. Col. Mark Smith.

Veterans, potential employers and community leaders agree that Marines who

Hometown Links as of Fall 2002

AL	Birmingham	birmingham@marinecorps.com	(205) 426-0555
AL	Mobile	mobile@marinecorps.com	(251) 344-6206
AR	Little Rock	littlerock@marinecorps.com	(501) 771-4323
CA	Camp Pendleton	camp Pendleton@marinecorps.com	(760) 763-4105
CA	San Diego	sandiego@marinecorps.com	(619) 688-1518
CA	Fresno	fresno@marinecorps.com	(559) 294-1095
CA	San Francisco	sanfrancisco@marinecorps.com	(650) 244-9806
CA	Miramar	miramar@marinecorps.com	(619) 253-3360
CO	Aurora	aurora@marinecorps.com	(303) 677-9408
CT	New Haven	newhaven@marinecorps.com	(203) 467-5322
DC	Anacostia	anacostia@marinecorps.com	(202) 433-2958
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IL	Chicago	chicago@marinecorps.com	(773) 539-6464
IL	Great Lakes	greatlakes@marinecorps.com	(847) 688-7129 x2760
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OR	Portland	portland@marinecorps.com	(503) 286-3962
RI	Providence	providence@marinecorps.com	(401) 461-2473
TN	Memphis	memphis@marinecorps.com	(901) 324-9425
TX	Dallas/Ft. Worth	ftworth@marinecorps.com	(Email only)
TX	San Antonio	sanantonio@marinecorps.com	(210) 223-1551
UT	Salt Lake City	saltlakecity@marinecorps.com	(Email only)
VA	Roanoke	roanoke@marinecorps.com	(540) 563-4979
WA	Ft. Lewis	ftlewis@marinecorps.com	(253) 967-2870
WI	Milwaukee	milwaukee@marinecorps.com	(414) 481-3860
WY	Cheyenne	cheyenne@marinecorps.com	(307) 637-0358

have served honorably deserve such support when they come home, Smith added.

Echoing that sentiment is Pat O’Leary, a veteran Marine sergeant who served with HMX-1 during 1974-1978. O’Leary endorses the Marine For Life program from his home in Louisville, Ky., where he is the workforce planning manager with UPS Airlines and has stayed connected with area Marines and veterans.

“I was a transitioning Marine once, I know how it feels,” said O’Leary. “I know the anxiety that goes along with that. I can be the guy ‘on point’ for transition-

ing Marines. They are about to ‘come ashore’ onto a beachhead that I have a whole lot of ‘intel’ on. I can show them where all the ‘landmines’ are buried and I can help them pick the best trail.”

For additional information on the Marine For Life program, transitioning Marines are invited to contact their career retention specialist, visit the website www.MarineForLife.com, e-mail MarineForLife@MarineCorps.com or phone 703/784-9140 (DSN 224). **M**

Marine For Life is offering a formal mechanism for sponsorship assistance to all Marines.

A series of explosions echoed through the barren desert hills and valleys along the coast here, Sept. 18, as the BAP Admiral Grau, a Peruvian fast missile cruiser, peppered the beach with its 6-inch guns.

As the naval barrage ended, assault amphibian vehicles, loaded with reserve and active-duty Leathernecks from Marine Forces Unitas, launched from the well deck of the USS Portland, and made their way to shore. Peruvian Marines followed in BMRs (wheeled amphibious armored personnel carriers) and Zodiac boats, which launched from three Peruvian tank landing ships—the BAP Pisco, BAP Callao, and BAP Paita.

Meanwhile, U.S. Navy SEALs cleared obstacles on the shore and marked the beach for the imminent landing. Peruvian helicopters hovered above a hilltop overlooking the beachhead. Ropes were dropped, and Peruvian Marine Commandos slid to the ground to take out “enemy” bunkers.

The largest combined amphibious landing exercise to date for the amphibious phase of Unitas 43-02, a multinational series of training exercises in South America, had begun.

“This was a really good training exercise,” said Lance Cpl. Drew Neilson, a reserve AAV crewman and independent landscaper from Gainesville, Fla. “Training like this, working with foreign units, shows us what it could be like in actual combat.”

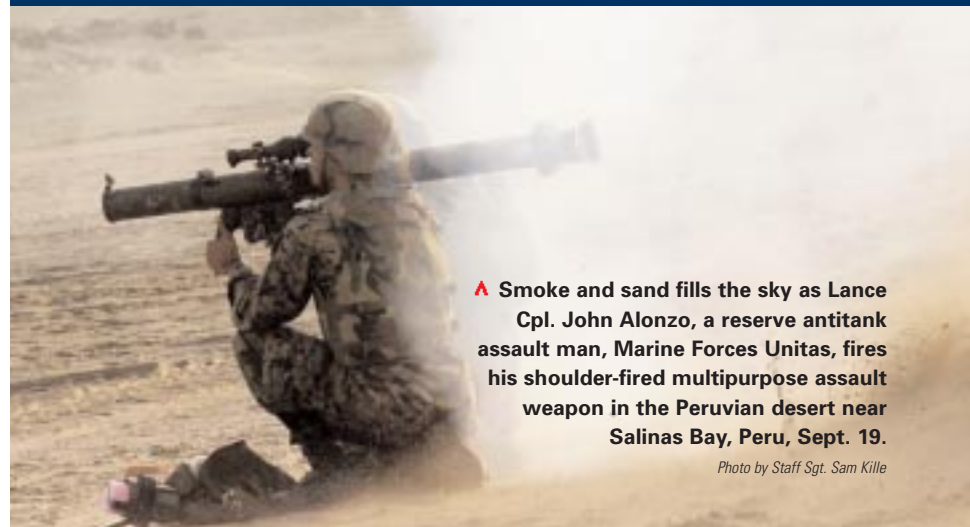
Peruvian Marine Lt. Marco Forti, from Lambayeque-Chiclayo, Peru, agreed. “The exercise was really well rehearsed,” said Forti. “It was an honor to work with the U.S. Marines in an exercise of this size. It went really well.”

As the U.S. and Peruvian Marines landed on the beach, the sound of machine gun and small arms fire filled the air. Unlike similar training exercises in the States, the U.S. Marines were firing live rounds from their AAVs while moving toward inland objectives. The inherent danger in such training kept the “trackers” on their toes.

“The exercise was very fast paced,” said Neilson, who had never participated in an exercise of this magnitude. “There’s only so much planning you can do in advance. When shooting and moving on command, you don’t have much time to react. You really have to think on your feet when doing something like this.”

Live-Fire Training Hits the Mark in Peru

By Staff Sgt. Sam Kille
SALINAS BAY, Peru



▲ Smoke and sand fills the sky as Lance Cpl. John Alonzo, a reserve antitank assault man, Marine Forces Unitas, fires his shoulder-fired multipurpose assault weapon in the Peruvian desert near Salinas Bay, Peru, Sept. 19.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Sam Kille

According to many of the Peruvians, the AAV crews were right on target.

“We really gained an appreciation for the fire support they gave us when we landed on the beach,” said Peruvian Marine Lt. Martin Magnani, from Lima, Peru. “They were very accurate.”

The trackers weren’t the only U.S. Marines who had to be at the top of their game. According to Gunnery Sgt. Jeff La Mar, a reserve air and naval gunfire liaison from La Palma, Calif., the exercise was an excellent opportunity to challenge and test MARFOR Unitas’ Fire Control Team. The FCT was divided into smaller teams, with some helping to coordinate direct and indirect fire aboard the BAP Admiral Grau, and others who teamed with Peruvian spotters aboard the BAP Paita, and ashore.

“It’s very easy to take for granted that it will be U.S. naval ships providing naval gunfire,” said La Mar, who left behind his position at Kodak to deploy with MARFOR Unitas. “That isn’t always the case. Because it is our job to work with the host nations, it is important to do something like this with someone other than the U.S. Navy.”

Doing so is easier said than done. “Language is a problem, along with

doctrinal differences regarding the way they employ their indirect fire systems,” La Mar said. “It’s not that their doctrine is worse or better than ours — it is just different. The key is understanding the differences while making sure our Marines ashore are safe and given the support they need.”

After securing their objectives ashore, the two nations conducted cross training to better acquaint each other’s Marines. The training included combined mechanized operations with the AAVs and BMRs; patrolling; and weapons systems.

“Sharing tactics and knowledge was very beneficial,” said Neilson of the mechanized operations. “Learning how others work helps keep our unit at the top of its game.”

Dusty, tired, but motivated, the U.S. Marines returned to the USS Portland, Sept. 20. From Salinas, the Marines will enjoy a few days of liberty in Lima. From there, they will continue to circumnavigate South America, making stops in Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil for future training exercises. They are scheduled to return to Camp Lejeune, N.C., in early December. **M**

PPV Provides Homes of the Future

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ment housing. Private companies then bear the cost for building, renovating, maintaining and managing family housing communities.

This partnership allows homes to be renovated or constructed faster, Ayers said. “Private companies can get construction loans based on the expected rental income from Marines’ BAH. This reduces the up-front cost to the Corps of fixing housing.”

The Corps will also require private companies to set aside funds for short- and long-term renovations, she said. This “will ultimately ensure homes remain in good condition over the life of the projects.”

Under PPV, service members sign leases and make monthly payments through allotments equal to the Basic Allowance for Housing for that area. Since BAH covers rent and normal utility usage, service members should have zero-out-of-pocket expense, Ayers said.

While private companies manage and maintain family housing areas, the Marine Corps will remain a participant in all key management decisions as a member of Limited Liability Company Boards.

As a safeguard, the Marine Corps leases the land to be used. This prevents the loss of land or units if a company defaults on a loan. The company cannot take out new debt against the project without the Corps’ consent.

Several PPV projects are already underway and more are scheduled for the future. The first contract was awarded to the Hunt Corporation in November 2000 for DeLuz Housing.

The PPV family housing program at Camp Pendleton is building new housing units and renovating old ones faster than the previous military-concerns process, which took a minimum of five years to complete, McDonald said.

Camp Pendleton residents began moving into the first 200 completed homes in October 2001. Once completed, this project will include 712 units.

The ribbon was cut June 26 on the joint Navy and Marine Corps project at Belle Chase Naval Air Station, New Orleans. The housing area features 512 new townhouse units. Once completed, the \$73 million project will have 935 units.

Another joint Navy and Marine Corps project opened in San Diego in August.

Additional projects are planned for MCB Camp Pendleton and MCAS Miramar. Future projects are also planned for MCB Quantico; Stewart, N.Y.; MCAS Yuma, Ariz.; MCB Hawaii; MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C.; and Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C.; to name a few.

“I think by 2005, about 95 percent of our family construction ... will be PPVs,” Gen. Jones said.

The Benefits:

What this means to service members is better homes and shorter waiting lists.

Through PPV projects, better homes can be constructed or renovated faster, especially in areas with critical housing needs, according to housing management officials at HQMC.

PPV housing areas will showcase well-landscaped, pedestrian friendly sites, Ayers said.

These “better homes” will include functional floor plans, usually larger than military-constructed homes. Home designs incorporate significant storage space and one- or two-car garages. Most will also have town home architecture and layouts as well as fenced yards.

Residents already living in PPV-managed housing areas are please with their new homes. “I love it. It has so much space. God, it’s beautiful and I can’t complain at all,” said Cpl. Blanca Hernandez, I Marine Expeditionary Force, of her home in the DeLuz Housing Area.

The homes are not the only thing to improve. PPVs will offer community services in the housing areas.

Some typical community services features to be expected include:

- large multi-function community centers,
- community recreation and education programs, coordinated with Marine Corps Community Services,
- one to three day response time for routine service calls,
- change of occupancy maintenance in three to five days,
- high-speed internet provided,
- yards maintained by property managers and
- pools, basketball courts and playgrounds.

Through PPV, the Corps will continue to ensure that Marines and their families enjoy a quality of life in keeping with their mission, Ayers said. **M**

Saving a Few Good Species

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resource conservation, Hirsh said. The goal is to continue, in partnership with USFWS, conserving the habitats entrusted to the Corps, “while educating the public that military operations are not only compatible with species conservation, but more often than not, the mission is the very reason threatened or endangered species still exist on those lands,” she added.

Reducing the Waste

Another method for reducing the Marine Corps impact on the environment is to reduce the amount of waste products Marines generate. Marines are actively encouraged to recycle everything from soda cans to office paper.

Most military housing areas throughout the Corps have some type of curbside program in place to collect recyclable material to divert this material from municipal landfills. In 2000, the Marine Corps recycled more than 67,000 tons of material that would have otherwise been sent to a landfill, said David Heinrichs, facilities engineer program manager, Facilities Branch, Installations and Logistics, HQMC.

In 2000, Marine Corps recycling programs generated more than \$2.6 million in direct revenues - resulting in more than \$9 million in avoided costs - by diverting recyclable material from landfills, Heinrichs said.

In 2001, the recycling program generated more than 2.9 million in revenues, he said. Marines recycled more than 58,000 tons of material, including 14,400 tons of paper, 14,000 tons of wood and 15,600 tons of metal, he added.

The Marine Corps also has a strong hazardous waste reduction program. Initiatives such as replacing chemical solvents with detergent solutions for cleaning metal parts are promoted throughout the Marine Corps. As a result, since 1993, hazardous waste disposal at Marine Corps installations has been reduced by more than 75 percent.

Maintaining realistic training while preserving the natural resources entrusted to the Corps is not an impossible mission, said Eck, but it does “require hard work and determination.”

As someone once said of Marines, “If it was easy, everyone would do it and it wouldn’t be the Marine Corps.” **M**

“It was an honor to work with the U.S. Marines in an exercise of this size. It went really well.”